

E-rate Newsletter for MI Libraries

E-rate News, Tips and Tricks

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With everyone's mind on the holidays we thought we would remind you that there are two major filing deadlines within the next two months. So don't forget these important dates - **Form 470 - January 15, 2009** and **Form 471 - February 12, 2009**.

We are here to answer any questions you have regarding e-rate. Just call the E-rate Hotline at **888-307-6569**.



No Tech Plan or CIPA compliance - what you can do

Did you know you can still file for erate to cover all of your basic telephone service?

Libraries can participate in E-rate without having a tech plan and/or being CIPA compliant. The only condition to filing without a tech plan is that the request be limited to basic local, cellular, PCS, and/or long distance telephone service and/or voice mail only.

CIPA requirements do not apply because funding requests are only for telecommunications services.

So think about filing for basic telecommunications services. If you need help, call the hotline at 888-307-6569.

Over 200 Michigan Libraries are not filing for E-Rate

Over 150 Michigan Libraries are taking advantage of the E-Rate program, but more than 200 are not. While there are many reasons for a library's decision not to participate, we want to make sure that every library makes an informed decision. We will be working to make the program more understandable, accessible and valuable for all Michigan Libraries. As we continue to work with you towards this goal, we will be reaching out to all of you via newsletters, training and other ways. We will also be contacting many of you via email. If you have any questions about

E-Rate, please call our hotline. The deadline for 2009 funding applications is rapidly approaching.

Create Your E-rate Binder Now!

It's never too early to start working on your erate binder. If the binder is created while you are gathering the information and filing Forms 470 and 471 it will be easy. Tabs for your binder should include the following:

1. USAC Forms & Certifications
2. USAC Letters
3. Technology Plan and Approval letter
4. Competitive bidding, Vendor evaluation and Contracts
5. PIA Review
6. CIPA (Child Internet Protection Act)
7. Service Delivery & Inventory Management (Priority 2)
8. Invoicing & Payments
9. Change Requests & Appeals
10. Miscellaneous

For more detail go to: <http://www.usac.org/sl/about/audits/e-rate-binder.aspx>

Common Audit Problems

The FCC's Office of Inspector General (OIG) is responsible for E-Rate Audits. They recently published a report based on 260 recent audits. The list of 'most common problems' below should serve as an alert to Michigan Libraries about the importance of following SLD guidelines and documenting the entire E-Rate process. The Audit report shows that the three most common causes of 'erroneous payments' (audit problems), and our recommendations for avoiding each, are shown below:

1. Inadequate processes and/or policies and procedures (29.7%) - Solution: Review your Library's business procedures that are outside of the normal E-Rate processes. If your Accounts Payable (Invoices), Procurement (Contracts etc.) and other business systems are not suited to E-Rate requirements (or don't exist) - you will have to create your own procedures for managing these.
2. Inadequate documentation (17.5%) - Solution: Create and maintain an E-Rate binder based on SLD guidelines and make sure you have copies of all required documents.
3. Disregard of FCC rules (12.2%) - Solution: Make sure that you understand and follow the basic SLD guidelines (most of these have to do with record retention and competitive bidding).

A copy of the full report in .pdf format is available on the FCC website at: http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/DOC-287307A1.pdf